AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please amend the English specification of the present invention as follows:

On page 6, paragraph 3, line 15 of the specification, please replace "compared with" with "with respect to". A marked-up version of the paragraph is reproduced below:

"4. A practical weakness of the assay described has proved to be the fact that the binding ability of the human recombinant TSHR used in the assay is lost relatively rapidly ~~compared with~~ with respect to the labelled bovine TSH used as competitor, particularly when the TSHR is provided in the liquid phase, for example bound to suspended magnetic particles, or used in solubilized form as component of homogeneous assays."

On page 8, paragraph 2, line 11 of the specification, please replace "compared with" with "with respect to". A marked up version of the paragraph is reproduced below:

"It is a further object of the invention to solve the problem of the loss of the binding ability of the TSHR ~~compared with~~ with respect to the tracer / competitor in the liquid phase, so that the method can be carried out as a customary automated method using suspensions of magnetic particles to which the TSHR is bound, or as a homogeneous method using the so-called KRYPTOR® technique."

Further, on page 8, line 26, please replace "and sera" with "from sera". A marked-up version of the paragraph is reproduced below:

"Said objects are achieved according to the invention by the use of affinity-purified polyclonal human autoantibodies against the TSH receptor (TSHR-Auto-Ab) ~~and~~ from sera of Graves' disease patients, and/or of animal antibodies which compete with these for binding sites of a functional human TSH recceptor, as a specific binding reagent in an immunological assay method for the clinical identification of autoantibodies against the TSH receptor (TSHR-Auto-Ab) in a sample of a biological fluid of a patient to be investigated for Graves' disease."

On page 9, paragraph 2, lines 12-13 of the specification, make the following changes:

"The object of providing a reagent kit for realizing the present invention is achieved by a preferred reagent kit according to claim 9, which, in addition to a functional TSHR as a specific binding reagent, ~~in particular as a labelled competitor,~~ also contains, in particular as a labelled competitor, a preparation of affinity-purified polyclonal human autoantibodies against the TSH receptor (TSHR-Auto-Ab) from sera of Graves' disease patients, and/or of animal antibodies which compete with these for binding sites of a functional human TSH receptor."

On page 15, paragraph 2, lines 29-30 of the specification, please replace "compared with" with "with respect to". A marked up version of the paragraph is reproduced below:

"A further advantage is that the labelling of the polyclonal antibodies (or of the animal antibodies mimicking them) by means of known techniques is possible with virtually any desired known labelling reagent without it being necessary to overcome the difficulties encountered in the labelling of TSH. The label may also be a part of a pair of detection markers known per se for a method in which the specific binding reagents (solubilized TSHR; competitor in the form of autoantibodies) is present in dispersed form in the liquid reaction mixture, a first labelling component which is part of a labelling system based on fluorescence or chemiluminescence extinction or amplification being bound to the antibody, and the second labeling component of this labelling system is bound to a second, non-competing antibody used for the indirect labelling of the solubilized TSHR or directly to the solubilized TSHR, so that, after binding of the labelled antibodies to TSHR, a measurable signal, e.g. a fluorescent signal, is generated, which signal permits detection of the resulting sandwhich complexes in the measuring solution. For this variant of the method, the longer binding capability of TSHR ~~compared with~~ with respect to the autoantibody preparation according to the invention, in particular compared with the binding capability with respect to TSH, is an extremely important advantage in practice."